



MEETING MINUTES
MILITARY and VETERANS LIAISON COMMITTEE
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2019 - 6:00 P.M.
125 EAST AVENUE, ROOM 218
NORWALK, CT 06851

1. **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** the meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff DeWitt at 6:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Jeff DeWitt.

2. **PUBLIC FORUM:**

a. None

3. **ROLL CALL:**

a. Present (8): Jeff DeWitt, Chair; Leon Breault, Veteran At-large; Matt Seebeck, Veteran At-large; Bryan Rooney, Military Outreach and Deputy Chair; Fred Wilms, Financial Services Chair; Larry Cafero, Legal Services Chair; Howard Dixon, Veteran At-large; Irene Dixon, Mayor Rilling's Staff.

b. Absent or excused (5): Dan Caporale, Veteran At-large; Don Overton, Veteran At-large; Deanna D'Amore – Health Department; Bob King, Labor and Business Relations Chair; Juliet Taylor, Veteran At-large.

4. **CHAIRMAN COMMENTS:**

a. (Repeat from last month) An application was submitted to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund (VVMF) to have the [Wall That Heals and Mobile Education Center](#), a ¾ scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, return to Norwalk. Norwalk has been approved. More to come from VVMF as they control the calendar and publicity.

b. REPEAT: sent an e-mail to Connecticut VA District 4 on the morning of 10/23 with no response yet regarding moving towards the Connecticut VA District 4 office move from Bridgeport to Norwalk and the potential / impact for the city. Need square footage, equipment, furniture requirements. The two employees that would come with the move are paid for by the state, so no cost to the city except for office space and a phone line. Pursuing public-private partnership agreements to assist can be a part of this effort. Don Overton has been involved in implementing this template in Palm Bay, Florida where the city opened a "Veteran Resource Center", and Palm Bay was recognized nationally for all they did. This center could become the primary center for veteran outreach to Norwalk veterans and active, Guard, and Reserve troops. There is great potential in partnerships with these offices and Norwalk Community College, American Legion, VFW, and more.



c. REPEAT: Jeff DeWitt has re-nominated Thomas C. O'Connor to the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame by the deadline on September 13. The package was declined in 2016. Fred Wilms suggested getting a cover letter from State Senator Bob Duff to add impact to the package.

5. REPORTS:

a. Deanna D'Amore – no report

b. Brian Rooney – Military Outreach: will be creating an action plan for deliverables discussed in meetings so there is an active and visible plan to implement the ideas. See addendums for other items Bryan presented to the members.

(1) Provided handout of a veteran leadership program in Western Pennsylvania that could be modeled in SW Connecticut

(2) Provided a handout of a home oil program for needy veterans.

(3) Provided a handout about Catch-A-Lift and an idea about a “workout weekend” to create a healthy alternative for Norwalk veterans.

c. Larry Cafero – Legal: Has a draft of a letter to send to local attorneys to encourage their participation in a veteran discount program. Letter will be sent to Bryan Rooney for editing and formatting.

d. Fred Wilms – no report

e. Bob King – Business / Labor: No report this month

6. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Matt Seebeck spoke about the Veterans Treatment Courts and the possibilities in this area. See addendum 2. Larry Cafero agreed to take this on. There are veterans on the Norwalk Police Department that may be the perfect fit to see this program become successful here. **(OPEN)**

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Bryan Rooney suggested starting a program where medical, legal, business entities in town receive a “Gold Star Stamp” which would indicate the entity is veteran friendly. **(OPEN)**

8. GOOD OF THE ORDER:

a. Repeat: Jeff DeWitt for Dan Caporale -- shared that the [Norwalk Veteran Memorial Committee](#) is on hiatus until September. Planning for Veterans Day is well under way. Guest speaker is Capt Vetter, former Norwalk resident, instructor at West Point.

9. MILITARY AND VETERAN RELATED EVENTS AROUND NORWALK

NOVEMBER 2019

3: Veteran of the Month and Flag Raising Ceremony, American Legion, 60 County Street
(11:00)

10: Veteran Recognition Dinner, American Legion, 5:00 p.m.; vets eat free, guests \$10; call 203-866-8249 with your reservation

11: Veterans Day ceremony; City Hall Concert Hall; 9:00 – 10:00 = music; 10:00 – 11:00 = ceremony

14: Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

19: Membership meeting for American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12, 60 County St (7:00)

21: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

DECEMBER 2019

1: Veteran of the Month and Flag Raising Ceremony, American Legion, 60 County Street (11:00)

7: National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day

11: OFFSITE; location TBD; Mulvoy-Tarlov-Aquino VFW Post 603 Monthly Membership Meeting (6:00)

14: National Wreaths Across America Day

17: Membership meeting for American Legion Post 12 and Auxiliary Unit 12, 60 County St (7:00)

19: Sons of the American Legion Squadron 12 Membership Meeting, 60 County St (7:00)

10. ADJOURNMENT: the meeting was adjourned by Jeff DeWitt at 6:47 p.m.

11. Next meeting is Monday, November 18, 2019, 6:00 p.m., room 231.

Addendum 1



VETERANS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

non profit

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CLIENT PORTAL

Enroll Now

INTAKE

Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania, Inc. (VLP) is an independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency founded in 1982 by Vietnam Veterans.



In the past 30 years, VLP has grown to be one of the largest providers of subsidized housing for Veterans and their families in Western Pennsylvania and operates two of the nation's most effective Veteran employment programs. Our team of experienced case managers including male and female Veterans, National Guard & Reserve members, family members of Veterans and civilians are committed to assisting ANY Veteran who walks through our door for help. Our programs can help Veterans, family members and service members living in the following counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Fayette, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Lawrence, Somerset, Washington and Westmoreland County.

Housing Assistance



Veterans Leadership Program helps Veterans secure affordable apartments located in safe neighborhoods, and close to community amenities & transportation.

VLP is a housing first model that assists Veterans with finding and maintaining their own apartments. We've made valuable relationships with local real estate agents and landlords who are familiar with our programs, making it a smooth transition from homelessness to renting a home. VLP case managers work one-on-one with Veterans to provide thoughtful recommendations with regard to disabilities and individual circumstances.

[EMERGENCY HOUSING](#)

[RAPID RE-HOUSING](#)

[PERMANENT HOUSING](#)

Supportive Services



Veterans Leadership Program provides a wide range of supportive services for Veterans, service members and their families.

When Veterans and their families have additional needs to keep a roof over their heads and a steady income, we provide a wide range of supportive services and connections to community resources to help Veterans complete their paths towards self-sufficiency, sustainability and a quality life.

Click on the links below for more information on VLP's Supportive Services Programs.

[HOMELESS PREVENTION](#)

[VETERANS COURT](#)

[SOAR](#)

[FREE TAX PREPARATION](#)

ECONOMY FUEL

MEMBERSHIP = HUGE SAVINGS



ECONOMY FUEL IS PROUD TO SERVE THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED.

Each year, we give heating oil to a deserving veteran through our Heat for Heroes program. Heat for Heroes was created as a way to say "Thank You" to veterans in our area and help keep them warm all winter long.

Want to say "thank you" to a deserving veteran? Nominate a veteran you know who you feel deserves to win up to \$1,500 of home heating oil this winter, compliments of Economy Fuel.

Simply fill out the form below. The winner will be announced at the end of the year.

Contest is open to veterans currently living in Fairfield and New Haven Counties who heat their home with oil.

ABOUT US

We have built our company around the principles that low prices do not have to mean poor service. In fact, we pride ourselves on the exact opposite. Great service, without any of the unnecessary fuss, can mean low prices - and no one knows that more than we do.

Economy Fuel is a full service heating oil company serving Fairfield and New Haven counties since 1965. We offer 24-hour emergency service, and install a wide variety of heating and cooling equipment.

We are the only company providing a program like our Heating Oil Buyers Club - and it's what we are known for! When you sign up for the Buyers Club, we are sure that you will find our great service and the low prices quite refreshing. In fact, we guarantee it.



ABOUT US

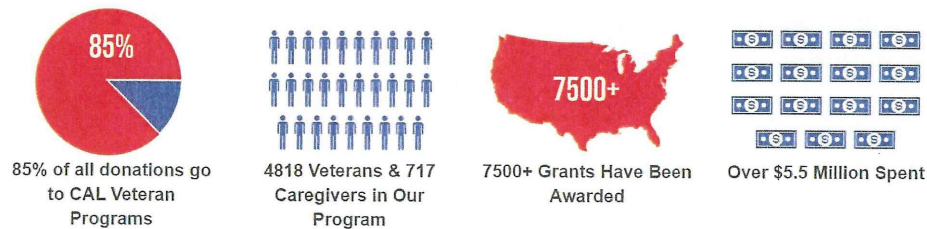
The Catch A Lift Fund enables post 9/11 combat wounded veterans all over the U.S. to recover and rehabilitate both physically and mentally through physical fitness, motivation and support.

OUR MISSION

CAL was founded in memory of Army Cpl. Chris Coffland, who lost his life in Afghanistan, while serving in Operation Enduring Freedom, November 2009. CAL's mission is rooted in his lifelong belief that through fitness, one can reach their highest potential both mentally and physically. CAL believes fitness is a personal choice, individual as each member. Choosing how and where to workout, offering options for coaching, accountability and mentors assures that each veterans unique needs are met.

OUR IMPACT

Since our founding in 2010, the Catch A Lift Fund has helped thousands of post 9/11 combat wounded veterans regain their mental and physical health through gym memberships, in home gym equipment, personalized fitness and nutrition programs and a peer support network. Catch A Lift vets are seeing and feeling results including dramatic weight loss, reduction in medications, improved sleep patterns, and strengthened relationships with family and friends, thanks to their healthier lifestyle. Our veteran testimonials attest that CAL has "saved their lives"; the greatest impact of all.



THE PROCESS

- 1) A Veteran Applies
 - a. Catch A Lift Fund provides fitness grants to post 9/11 combat wounded veterans all over the U.S
- 2) Landing Zone
 - a. The Landing Zone is a platform to kickstart our members' fitness and nutrition journey while awaiting funding.
- 3) Cal Grant
 - a. Once funding is secured each veterans personalized fitness request is granted to fit their needs.
 - b. Grant cycle is for 1 year.
 - c. Grant choices provide fitness facilities anywhere in the US or home equipment, nutrition, remote coaching, workout plans for specific injuries and motivational support.

- d. Yearly renewals are determined upon accountability, participation and funds available.

4) Accountability Program

- a. Catch A Lift Fund's Accountability Program enables veterans to check in with their customized personal member dashboard for up to date status and reporting on health, attendance, and progress.

5) Education

- a. For veterans who show a passion and business minded desire to further their immersion in the fitness industry, CAL offers the opportunity for further education.

6) Comradery

- a. CAL works every day to foster and bring back the sense of comradery that veterans had during their military service.
- b. Yearly events teaming veteran members in athletic competitions involving community support.
- c. Veteran coaches and mentors that help motivate and cultivate a sense of family while offering support throughout the year.
- d. Nationwide benefits where members can meet fellow veterans, share stories and foster friendships.

7) Healthy Future

- a. It is CAL's goal that every veteran in our program goes on to lead a rich and healthy future. Many CAL veterans have gone on to be highly successful in their respective careers under the tenants of: Healing minds, changing bodies and saving lives.

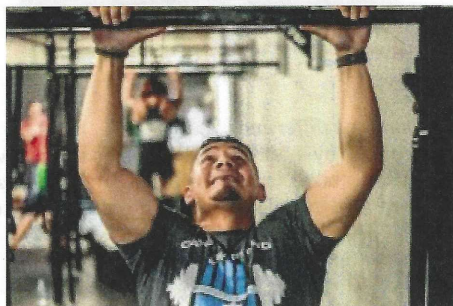
GET INVOLVED

Volunteers across the country are critical in helping CATCH A LIFT achieve their goals. There are many ways to get involved: coordinate a COFFLAND HERO CHALLENGE at your gym, host a fundraiser in your town or at your favorite restaurant, participate in a race in your town, or even a Facebook Birthday Campaign.

If you have interest in making a more personal commitment there are opportunities to become a CAL coach if you are certified and professionally trained in fitness, nutrition or another specialized area. CAL coaches help Catch a Lift track veteran members throughout the year to ensure they are reaching their goals and have the support they need.

Catch A Lift depends on dedicated volunteers so that we can accomplish our mission. Each and every person that contributes to CAL makes a difference!

See below for more details or contact Susan Sturtevant for information at: ssurtevant@catchaliftfund.com



COFFLAND HERO CHALLENGE:

Your gym can make a difference...

The Catch A Lift Fund is changing the lives of Veterans all over the country through fitness programs paired with motivational support. Your gym can help!

COFFLAND HERO CHALLENGES are fun, easy to execute and can be done in any gym setting with your members and the community. Prize package provided and your gym will be featured on our website as a *Gyms Across America* supporter and social media pages.

Contact Katelyn Rockwell for more information at: katelyn@catchaliftfund.com

CITY TO CITY BENEFITS

Ricky Davis USMC (RIP) & Rob Fessock US Army

Host a CAL Benefit in your city! These benefits are becoming a huge success, fun and a meaningful way to raise awareness, new support and funding across the nation. It also allows our supporters to include and use their own city or town to start a movement of giving back within their network of friends, families and colleagues. CAL is with you every step of the way!

Contact Kristine Sandoval for more information at: ksandoval@catchaliftfund.com



DINING FOR HEROES CHALLENGE

Kevin Bruffet US Army

Local Restaurants and YOU can make a difference...

Represent CAL in your local town or city by initiating or hosting an evening with your friends and family; sports team or work colleagues that can take place in most restaurants across the country. No matter the restaurant, no matter the town, getting involved is the start in contributing to getting our veterans back to a healthy lifestyle through fitness.

Contact Susanne Kennedy for information at: susanne@catchaliftfund.com



CAL COACH

CAL Accountability Program provides veterans with the three pillars proven to help veterans maximize their wellness potential: motivation, accountability and peer support. Coaches remotely assess veteran members and help sets goals for rehabilitation and reintegration, as we target solutions for isolation and non-communication within the veteran population.

Contact Melissa Leuck for more information at: mleuck@catchaliftfund.com



WHAT IS A WARRIOR FIT WEEKEND?

CAL veteran athletes join communities across the nation in regions and cities for a fitness training weekend. Lead by a volunteer host and CAL Warrior Fit Weekend lead, members experience full training sessions in multiple aspects of fitness, nutrition and team building, through workout sessions and workshops over a 3 day weekend.

Community business owners of diverse fitness facilities open up their spaces to train each veteran in diverse fitness regimens, from Boxing, CrossFit, Strength and Conditioning, to nutrition planning, and team support. The entire community comes together, challenges each other physically and mentally, shares experiences and life journeys, and embraces each other in a safe and welcoming environment. Friends, mentors and relationships are often forged for years to come; all through blood, sweat and tears.

This is a list of resources other veterans have found useful. They include transition assistance, wellness, mental health, mentorship and volunteer opportunities.

If you have any recommendations that we should consider including; please email them to ksandoval@catchaliftfund.com

[Click here to find Vet Center Locations](https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/vetcenter.asp) (<https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/vetcenter.asp>) or contact Vet Center Outreach Specialist Jon Dansicker (410) 703-5783

Transition Assistance

- [Semper Fi Fund](https://semperfund.org) (<https://semperfund.org>)
- [Veterans Leadership Program – Veteran Employment, Veteran ...](http://www.vlpwpa.org) (<http://www.vlpwpa.org>)
- [Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society \(NMCRRS\) – Financial Assistance ...](http://www.nmcrrs.org) (<http://www.nmcrrs.org>)
- [The American Legion a U.S. Veterans Association](https://www.legion.org) (<https://www.legion.org>)
- [DAV : Disabled American Veterans Charity – FIND, DONATE, JOIN ...](https://www.dav.org) (<https://www.dav.org>)
- [American Corporate Partners](http://www.acp-usa.org) (<http://www.acp-usa.org>)
- [Disabled American Veterans](https://www.dav.org) (<https://www.dav.org>)
- [Assisted Living](https://www.assistedliving.org/assisted-living-benefits-for-veterans) (<https://www.assistedliving.org/assisted-living-benefits-for-veterans>)

ECO/REC Wellness

- [White Heart Foundation](http://www.whiteheart.org) (<http://www.whiteheart.org>)
- [Vail Veterans Program](https://www.vailveteransprogram.org) (<https://www.vailveteransprogram.org>)
- [Operation Game On](http://operationgameon.org) (<http://operationgameon.org>)
- [Team River Runner – River to Recovery](https://www.teamriverrunner.org/) (<https://www.teamriverrunner.org/>)
- [Peter Harsch Prosthetics](http://phprosthetics.com) (<http://phprosthetics.com>)
- [Indiana Prosthetics](http://indianaprosthetics.com) (<http://indianaprosthetics.com>)
- [Elephant Grass](http://elephantgrass.us) (<http://elephantgrass.us>)

Mental Health

- [Home | MentalHealth](https://www.mentalhealth.gov) (<https://www.mentalhealth.gov>)
- [Give an Hour](https://giveanhour.org) (<https://giveanhour.org>)
- [The Soldiers Project](https://www.thesoldiersproject.org) (<https://www.thesoldiersproject.org>)
- [Veteran's PATH | Peace, Acceptance, Transformation, Honor](https://www.veteranspath.org) (<https://www.veteranspath.org>)
- [Active Heroes | Veterans Crisis Hotline](https://activeheroes.org/get-help/?gclid=EALalQobChMIn8arsuik1QIVWVYNCh11BQNpEAAAYASAAEgK5Z_D_BwE) (https://activeheroes.org/get-help/?gclid=EALalQobChMIn8arsuik1QIVWVYNCh11BQNpEAAAYASAAEgK5Z_D_BwE)
- [Addiction Center](http://www.addictioncenter.com/Addiction/Veteran) (<http://www.addictioncenter.com/Addiction/Veteran>)
- [SAFE: Soldiers And Families Embraced](https://www.soldiersandfamiliesembraced.org) (<https://www.soldiersandfamiliesembraced.org>)

Mentorship/Volunteer

- [Team Rubicon](https://teamrubiconusa.org) (<https://teamrubiconusa.org>)
- [Mission Continues | Reporting for Duty in Your Community](https://www.missioncontinues.org) (<https://www.missioncontinues.org>)
- [Team Red White & Blue](https://www.teamrwb.org) (<https://www.teamrwb.org>)

Sleep Resources

- [Tuck.com – Sleep Health Information, Reviews and News](https://www.tuck.com) (<https://www.tuck.com>)